

Hon. Tim Bishop  
One Minute Statement  
July 11, 2006

Mr. Speaker, eye-popping figures in a new GAO report just made the case for extending the Medicare Part D enrollment deadline a great deal more compelling:

- Exhibit A: Insurance providers failed to answer phone calls accurately in response to 70 percent of the questions asked by seniors about their benefit.
- Exhibit B: Call centers under-estimated out-of-pocket costs seniors have to pay by thousands of dollars.
- Exhibit C: Like the insurance providers, Medicare operators often answered questions incorrectly, according to an earlier GAO report.

You'd figure the extra \$400 billion added to the initial price-tag of the Medicare bill – that the CMS actuaries didn't want to tell us about – would at least buy seniors some peace of mind.

Instead, Part D continues to confuse and frustrate seniors, who, through no fault of their own, have a 3 in 10 chance of receiving the right information about their options.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to help extend the enrollment deadline; repeal the sign-up penalty; and repeal the provision locking seniors into a plan for a year once they sign up – so they won't have to pay the consequences of a bad bill for rest of their lives.